

Rawls's Mill, Battle of ^[1]

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Rawls's Mill, Battle of

by Wiley J. Williams, 2006

The [Civil War](#) ^[2] battle at Rawls's Mill in [Martin County](#) ^[3] took place on 2 Nov. 1862. Maj. Gen. John G. Foster, commander of Union forces in North Carolina, was leading his 5,000 soldiers from Washington, N.C., to [Wilmington](#) ^[4] when attacked by [Confederates](#) ^[5] under Col. Henry "Harry" King [Burgwyn Jr.](#) ^[6] At Rawls's Mill, approximately six miles south of Williamston, Foster's infantry, artillery, and cavalry fought a spirited half-hour battle with Burgwyn's troops, which had far fewer men and neither artillery nor cavalry. The Confederates were driven from their works and across a bridge, burning it to prevent pursuit. Nevertheless, this encounter was a trying ordeal for the green Union recruits of such regiments as the 44th Massachusetts, which had been organized only 60 days previously.

About noon on 3 November, Foster's army arrived at Williamston. They expected another fight, but the town was nearly deserted. The troops plundered the town, destroying everything that could not be taken.

References:

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